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Rodes to Dr. Silver, undated

Rodes Currie

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hear call my name but Alex Cambitiglou on
his way to Europe. We had a long talk about
Alb. Miss & it sounds as if Miss Way has
just been handed the entire Dept of Classics.
I hope she doesn't work herself into another
stroke. She is liable to, she is so conscientious.
I had a very kind note from Mr. Warren, too,
I was pleased to hear about his book &
the Oxford Press - which I confidently expected.
I know that he will be very much missed
on the campus & that his book will be very good.

I can't tell you how much I ap-
preciated your letter - for several reasons,
but for one, I suppose, because ^{I felt} I had mildly
let you down. I remember, of course, that
you warned me against C. V. W., but I can't
deny that my one real regret is thinking that
perhaps I gave up too easily. God knows I
thought about it enough before I did it.
I hope that what I have done will end
up so that any confidence you have in
me is justified. Thanks -

Roder

If I should manage to do anything
creditable I will send you a
bulletin.

Dear Mr. Silver -

It was certainly good to get your letter. Since you heard from me I have managed to get a kind of half-witted temporary job, so that I am still able to pay the rent at the Y, but I am sure that I am the one who should be writing in red ink, not you. Of course, even if I were a millionaire I think I would find it hard to live on my income in this wicked and fascinating city, which must surely be the modern Nineveh. Sometimes it is all a little overwhelming but in a way I have not minded collapsing here at the Y and doing nothing at all that requires any intellectual effort and just thinking about what I want to do. New York is where I always wanted to end up and I have decided to stick it out here, sink or swim, & if I can't get any kind of non-teaching job that is suitable, try to last thru the summer & get some kind of teaching spot in this area. I want particularly to thank you for offering me sanctuary at Ole Miss next year. In many ways my last two years there were my best ever, which ten years ago I could

never have believed, and you couldn't have
done anything or timed anything in a way that
would have given my morale more of a lift.
But there is something quiet and anonymous
about it here - no crazy relatives and no
crazy politicians and no cheap Washington or
Georgetown phonies - plus the fact that it
fascinate me here anyway - that makes me
determined to fight it out on this line if
it takes all summer. Maybe by '58-'59 I
will be able to try to do something about
Columbia. History is still the only thing I
am seriously interested in but the only
trouble seems to be that my approach to
it is too highly personal. There have naturally,
as I anticipated, been times since I got off the
bus when I have thought that I had a
large hole in my head to leave Hopkins.
It would have been easier to stay in some
way but although I can go all out when
I am doing something I regret I did
not have any respect for what I was
doing at Hopkins or, for that matter,
for Woodward, either. If he had deliberately
conducted a war of nerves to make me
leave he could hardly have planned it
better & this was doubly odd because some
such dull people there had such a breeze.

of course you know that I am constitutionally incapable of being catty or malicious so I will tell you about the rest of the Hopkins faculty. Dr. Painter, the chairman, is a medievalist, is a kind of roi farnant, who is belligerently eccentric in a particularly unattractive way, or so it seemed to me. He goes ostentatiously off to sleep in intimate seminars addressed by visiting celebrities and he has a kind of voyeur's eye view of history. Like an English prof. at All Men (who shall be nameless) everything for him resolves itself into a kind of leering, smirking sex. He can probably tell you all about Eleanor of Aquitaine's menstrual periods or the real low-down on what really gave with the Knights Templar. People like this should be put out of Commission, I think, like the man who peeped at Lady Gadiwa. Then of course there is Woodward. I think he is actually number one in the department's pecking order. He is increasing notoriety plus his determination that it will further increase plus his facility with a kind of heavy pedantic irony that I thought had gone out with Ichabod Crane plus Painter's nonchalance ensures that he is a voice to be reckoned with. Then there is his storge, Dr. Barker, who does the intellectual history course. He has got all the diffuseness of a literary or intellectual historian plus a kind of Eisenhower syntax

and he can retreat, if he feels his dignity threatened, from a kind of bumbling nearsighted playfulness to the last word in pomposity. Then there is dr. Spring, whose speciality is the English aristocracy of the early 19th century and need I say more. He reminds me of a description of a Washington friend of mine: a mass of affections held together by a Brooks Brothers tie except that with Spring is a desperate desire to ape the English that keeps him from flying to pieces. He is Canadian but he has been in England once or twice and picked up an English raincoat & a few tweeds and all the English variations in pronunciation even down to the little forced stutter and worst of all he has got all the worst clichés of the most downish English viewpoint on the U.S.A. He reads Russell Kirk. Hatch. Then there is dr Campbell, who is very pleasant & fills low place in the pecking order. And those are all the ones I got to know. Woodward is currently off on a psychological - sociological kick - because he is very up on all the newest fads, I suppose - but he strives for literary elegance, too, to the point of dragging in phrases like "what the French call *arrière pensée*," (dr Painter has got what I call *diversee pensée*) &

you must examine his reference to the Francis Thompson line in the newest edition of his Jerry Crow, last chapter. His must be a very well-thumbed Bartlett's. I did four papers last year, all exhaustively researched, and the last one, for Spring, on Lord Althorp & the Corn Laws, I really let myself go on and turned into an attack on psychology, sociology & the Lord David Cecil-Trevelyan-Spring school of fashionable whiggery. I didn't really have time to re-write it but I at least was amused & so were the more discerning students & I hope that you would have been, too. I didn't really do anything that you wouldn't do to a visiting speaker - or to Hudson Strode.

Well, I know that you must be exhausted by now with this lengthy harangue. I must say, in closing, that I know you are all pleased about Bill's scholarship. He certainly can't do better than that. Having helped so many other people it would have been indeed inappropriate for him to have worked out otherwise.

The other morning I went out to get on the bus & who should I